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Descriptors- *College Students, *Junior Colleges, Seniors, Social Environment, *Student Subcultures, *Testing, *Transfer Students

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This study compared two subgroups at the University of Missouri: the junior college transfers and the native students. The Environmental Assessment Technique (EAT) was used, with its personal orientation classifications of realistic, scientific, social, conventional, enterprising, and artistic. The major for each of the subjects was categorized by orientation, and the percentages for the two subgroups were compared to test the null hypotheses that there would be no significant difference between the subgroups in any of the six orientations. No such differences were found. The results of the study suggest that the transfers are representative of the university student body and have been well assimilated by the native culture. Since EAT proved practical for describing a social environment, the author suggests refining it and using it to show differences among the subcultures on a junior college campus. Such differences would show where adjustments are needed in program offerings. (HH)

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JUNIOR COLLEGE TRANSFERS AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE

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Although many comparisons have been made between the junior college population and the population of the four-year institutions, there remains much yet to be done in order to arrive at a clear description of either of these populations.

Most of the information that is available concerning these comparisons has concerned itself with various discrete variables. Such variables as grade point averages, socio-economic background, academic ability, family background, and financial ability have received the brunt of the research.

Medsker (1965) has suggested that we now have enough discrete information to describe the junior college student body with some precision. Research should now concentrate less on discrete variables and more on multi-variable approaches to describing subcultures in the junior college student population for whom programs can be planned.

In attempting to describe one of these subcultures Knoell & Medsker (1964) used academic majors as a basis for comparing junior college transfer students with students native to the universities. They concluded that the two

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groups were quite evenly matched when the samples from all the colleges used in the study were combined. When the distribution of majors for particular colleges or particular types of colleges were examined, marked differences were found. The transfer students were concentrated in majors in the various applied fields while the native students graduated with proportionately larger numbers in the liberal arts and sciences.

This study was designed to also compare the junior college transfer students with students who were native to the university by the use of the Environmental Assessment Technique (EAT) (Astin, 1965; Astin & Holland, 1961, 1963; Holland, 1966).

Procedure

Technique

The Environmental Assessment Technique (EAT) presents a method for describing a social environment such as a campus culture by defining the dominant characteristics of a group-such characteristics being dependent upon the typical characteristics of its members. Such an environment or culture is defined in terms of the six personal orientations as defined by Astin and Holland (Astin, 1965; Astin & Holland, 1961, 1963; Holland, 1966). These orientations for a particular group are based on the vocational choice or, as in a campus culture, academic majors chosen

by the members of that culture.

These orientations have been defined as Realistic, Scientific, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, and Artistic. For each of these orientations a description of the model orientation has been presented and the corresponding majors have been identified. These descriptions represent hypotheses about the climate and characteristic presses of each orientation (Astin & Holland, 1961).

Sample

For the purposes of this study two subgroups were identified for comparison.

Subgroup 1: The junior college transfer students who were seniors at the University of Missouri. (N = 215)

Subgroup 2: A random sample of those seniors who started their program at the University of Missouri. (N = 353)

Method

The major for each member of the sample groups was ascertained. These majors were then divided into the six personal orientations as defined by Astin & Holland (Astin, 1965; Astin & Holland, 1961, 1963; Holland, 1966). The percentages comprising the six orientations for Subgroup 1 were compared with percentages comprising the six orientations of Subgroup 2.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested ($p < .01$) by

the use of *z* tests for the significance of difference between proportions for independent samples.

Ho: There is no difference between subgroup 1 and subgroup 2 in the proportion representing the Realistic orientation.

Ho: There is no difference between subgroup 1 and subgroup 2 in the proportion representing the Scientific orientation.

Ho: There is no difference between subgroup 1 and subgroup 2 in the proportion representing the Social orientation.

Ho: There is no difference between subgroup 1 and subgroup 2 in the proportion representing the Conventional orientation.

Ho: There is no difference between subgroup 1 and subgroup 2 in the proportion representing the Enterprising orientation.

Ho: There is no difference between subgroup 1 and subgroup 2 in the proportion representing the Artistic orientation.

Results

Table 1 presents the results of the *z* tests for the six hypotheses.

Insert Table 1 about here

No significant differences were found between the transfer group and the native group in regard to the hypotheses tested.

Discussion

After examination of the data, it is felt by the investigator that these two groups, transfer students and native students, are quite similiar in choices of academic majors and hence, in light of this technique, in personal orientations. The results of this study suggest that the transfer students are representative of the culture of the university students body in general. It would also suggest that the transfer population is well assimilated by the native culture.

Although the results of this study have shown no significant differences between the two groups, this technique (EAT) was found to be a practical tool for describing a social environment. It is suggested by the investigator that this instrument could be refined and used on the junior college campus to provide indications of the differences between the various subcultures that are found on the junior college campus. It is also suggested that the technique could be used for comparision of junior college transfer students and native students if the comparison was made immediately upon graduation from the junior college rather than waiting until there are seniors.

Summary

The Environmental Assessment Technique was used to determine the differences in personal oreientations between the junior college transfer students and the native students at a large state university. No significant differences were found between the two groups. The following recommendations were made:

1. The EAT does provide a practical instrument for measuring differences in personal orientations, climate and characteristic presses of groups.

2. The EAT could be refined for use with a more varying population and be used on the junior college campus for distinguishing differences between the various subcultures for the improvement of program planning.

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TABLE I

Results of z Tests

Hypothesis	z	
Realistic	.026	NS
Scientific	.553	NS
Social	.534	NS
Conventional	.588	NS
Enterprising	.034	NS
Artistic	.851	NS